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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 002289

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [NL](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: SEPT 13-14 GAERC: DISCUSSION WITH DUTCH OFFICIALS

REF: A. STATE 193154

[1](#)B. BISHARAT/SCHOFER E-MAIL

[1](#)C. 9/8/04

Classified By: Polcouns A. Schofer for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. Emboffs discussed Sept 13-14 GAERC agenda and reftel subjects with MFA Political Affairs Department Director Jaap Werner on September 8 and with MFA European Correspondent Joep Wijnands on September 9. The Dutch clearly signaled that EU member states on the IAEA board will not support referral of the Iran issue to the UNSC. The Dutch are committed to finding EU funds for the UN Protection Force in Iraq despite technical and legal obstacles involving the Commission. Other EU support activities for Iraq (police training etc) are still in the process of being defined. The Dutch anticipated no serious EU disagreements on Sudan/Darfur or Bosnia. The upcoming GAERC will also discuss Belarus (elections), African Great Lakes (probable support for proposed reinforced UN role), and ASEM (formal endorsement of Gymnich decision on Burmese participation). End summary.

Sudan/Darfur

[1](#)2. (C) The EU agrees with the US about the need to maintain international pressure on the Sudanese government to fulfill its commitments. The GAERC will have sanctions "explicitly on the table," which in practical terms means that the ministers want to look at the options and have the ground prepared to implement sanctions "immediately" if appropriate.

The EU wants to "reinforce" the African Union observer mission in Darfur and support financially or logistically. But the EU wants to respect AU and UN "ownership" of action in Darfur and will await AU requests and/or UN decision before acting. Werner added, however, that the EU will not be passive in awaiting an invitation but will be in contact with AU on needs.

Iran

[1](#)3. (C) The GAERC will want to express concern about developments in Iran not only with regard to the nuclear issue but also human rights. However, the EU position will not support a referral by the September IAEA Board of Governors to the Security Council. Werner said that member states -- including the UK, Germany, and France -- believed it was too early and too risky to refer the issue to the Security Council, particularly since the expected IAEA report, taken alone, did not appear to justify such a step. Werner suggested that the time until the November BOG meeting should be used to intensify pressure on Iran to cooperate, and to convince Russia and China not to block possible action at the Security Council. Moving the issue to the Security Council too soon, he said, would allow Iran to "get off the hook" by ending its cooperation with the IAEA. Without a "plan B," the international community would "lose its grip" on the process and end up exerting even less pressure on Iran. Wijnands separately expressed it as a member state belief that referral in September "could make things worse" but if by November there has been no movement from Iran, then referral "would become a concrete option." Emboffs stressed that the costs of failing to hold Iran to account were mounting and argued that the international community sent the wrong signal to Iran by not referring the issue to the Security Council.

Iraq

[1](#)4. (C) The Dutch officials said that the EU is leaning toward providing significant financial support to the UN Protection Force in Iraq, although they cautioned that the details (including total figures) remained to be worked out. The hitch that developed at the Gymnich over whether the funds could come from the Commission or not was primarily a technical issue, they said. Werner noted that the Dutch have asked their own legal people to counter the Commission argument that Commission funds cannot be used for "military operations" -- so far, however, the Dutch legal advisors were leaning toward accepting the Commission argument. Speaking a day later, Wijnands seemed more definite, saying it appeared that member states would have to come up with the money, though some may still want to argue at the GAERC that the

protection force would not be a military operation. Werner said the twenty million for election support is "locked in" for that and could not be shifted to protection force support. Both stressed that the Dutch, as EU president, would continue to push member states to come up with the necessary funds individually if Commission funds were not available.

15. (C) Werner and Wijnands both said that they had "heard" that states earlier identified as providing the 1,800 soldiers for the protection force might now be reluctant to do so. The level of EU support for the force, they suggested, might depend to some degree on whether the force was viewed as a truly international, independent force or a subset of the MNF. Drawing from refs, poloffs stressed that a number of states have offered to provide troops if the costs were met by a third party, such as the EU.

16. (C) The GAERC will move ahead with endorsing the conclusions of the EU's exploratory mission (already informally endorsed at the Gymnich) calling for EU support for police training, civil administration, rule of law, and elections. The Commission is to come up with specific proposals in these areas, but these will probably not be ready for Council review until the October GAERC. Werner and Wijnand predicted that any election observers would most likely be made available by member states rather than the Commission given the Commission's concerns regarding security, although Werner noted that this could change if the security situation improved. Werner reiterated that FM Bot had invited Iraqi PM Allawi to address the November 5 European Council meeting, and said that the Dutch also hoped to receive Iraqi President Ghazi al-Yawer in The Hague during his current European tour. (Note: If al-Yawer does not come to The Hague, then FM Bot would try to meet him in Brussels when both are there next week. End Note.)

Other GAERC issues: Belarus, African Great Lakes, and ASEM

17. (C) According to Wijnands, ministers will use the occasion of the GAERC to remind Belarus that the October 17 parliamentary elections should be "free and fair", as should the planned referendum on a constitution amendment that would permit Lukachenko to continue as president. On the Great Lakes, the ministers will discuss the situation and the UN Secretary General's proposals for reinforcing the MONUC in

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the Congo. At the Gymnich the ministers basically concluded that the EU should be ready to contribute more, either money or manpower, because the situation threatens stability not only in the Congo, but in the region. On ASEM, the GAERC is expected to endorse formally the "package" that was approved at the Gymnich that will permit the ASEM to proceed with Burmese participation at the minister level. (Note: On ASEM, Werner noted that the French -- who had not been present at the Gymnich discussion -- had posed some "technical" concerns regarding the package, but he did not expect these to prevent the GAERC from endorsing the compromise. End Note.)

SOBEL